

By Rep. Steve Driehaus

With the U.S. House of Representatives adjourned for the summer work period, I have had the opportunity to meet with numerous constituents, and I look forward to hearing from many more in coming weeks. I will be reaching out to people across greater Cincinnati at Congress on Your Corner events, tele-townhall conferences, and meetings with a various groups and individuals. This is an ideal time to address the challenges facing our country and community, particularly the debate over healthcare.

Healthcare affects the day-to-day lives of so many Americans. This is a critical issue, and I'm committed to taking the time necessary to fix healthcare reform in a way that addresses current problems and gives families in Cincinnati and across the country peace of mind.

We need solutions that guarantee no one can be denied coverage because of a preexisting condition. We need assurances that a person changing jobs won't lose health coverage. We need to give patients more choices when it comes to healthcare, and we need to make sure doctors and patients are choosing the best treatments.

At the same time, we need to pay for healthcare reform responsibly. Meaningful reform must include protections that will reduce costs for small business owners and the Middle Class, not worsen their burdens. We can help pay for these reforms by cutting costs and eliminating waste in our current healthcare system. Moving from a system of illness and treatment toward a system of wellness and prevention will help to drive down costs. Investing in healthcare IT will help to eliminate waste while improving quality of care. These savings will help to provide quality, affordable healthcare for every American.

Healthcare reform is a complex task that requires input from all those affected. That's why I joined with other moderate Democrats in delaying a vote on healthcare reform until the fall. Before we move forward, we need to have these conversations so that every voice is heard and every viewpoint is considered. I have recently met with groups representing a range of opinions on healthcare. As always, my door is open and I invite more conversations no matter your opinion. This conversation is too important for anyone to be left out, and I welcome a lively discussion on healthcare and any other issue affecting my constituents.

I know that the people in greater Cincinnati are concerned and informed citizens who engage in the debate on important issues in a thoughtful and thorough way. We can disagree on these issues, but we share the values of civility and respect for one another that have defined and strengthened our community for generations. These values will guide our discussion and improve the debate as we continue to work toward healthcare reform. These are the values I was raised to embrace growing up on the west side of Cincinnati, and these are the values that I'm proud to represent.

I look forward to hearing from you.